

## **Lt. Governor John Garamendi's Statement on President Bush Lifting the Offshore Oil Drilling Ban**

SACRAMENTO - Lieutenant Governor John Garamendi, who serves as a California State Lands Commissioner and has a longtime commitment to protecting the environment in California and as the former Deputy Secretary to the U.S Department of the Interior, issued the following statement after President Bush lifted the executive ban on offshore drilling that has been in place since his father was president.

"This is a last gasp attempt by President Bush to quiet the national furor over skyrocketing oil prices. There is clearly a disconnect when the President equates extracting more offshore oil from our pristine coastline with lowering the cost of fuel," Lieutenant John Garamendi said. "Why would you risk damaging our coastline with oil spills for such a minor gain? We need national leadership and long term strategy from our President on developing renewable energy resources, national fuel efficiency standards and realistic conservation measures. We should not be investing in developing fossil fuels, but rather in developing a broad portfolio of sustainable energy resources that simultaneously reduce our national dependence on fossil fuels and protect our precious environmental resources."

Lieutenant Governor John Garamendi's Past Environment Record:

As chairman, Garamendi led the State Lands Commission to reject the proposed Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) terminal off the Oxnard/Malibu coast, highlighting the plan's deficiencies in protecting the environmental health of the communities, the ocean and coastline.

As a member of the Ocean Protection Council, Garamendi developed a plan & championed legislation (Pacific Protection Initiative; 5 marine debris bills to reduce ocean pollution) to greatly decrease pollution of California beaches from plastic refuse, reducing the danger to California's beaches and marine life.

As Deputy Secretary of the U.S. Department of the Interior, Garamendi oversaw the Department's eight bureaus and helped develop national global warming policy with Vice President Al Gore and Interior Secretary Bruce Babbitt. He also was the key negotiator for water disputes throughout California and brought the Riverside Habitat Conservation Plan to successful implementation, which protected 66,000 acres of rare habitat. It is a national model.

As a California legislator, Garamendi authored the Tahoe Bond Act (1982), allowing the State to acquire and preserve private land in the Tahoe Basin. Since then, he has continued to help lead the state's efforts to protect the quality and clarity of Lake Tahoe's water, shore zone, natural habitat, and regional development activities.

Garamendi's 32 years of public service and environmental leadership was recently recognized by leading California coastal advocates:

- Environmental Defense Center (Environmental Hero Award, June 2008)
- San Diego Coast Keeper (2007 Coastal Champion Award, November 2007)
- The California Coastal Coalition & the Wetlands Recovery Project (2007 Friend of the Coast Award, April 2007)

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